

The Voyage of the Frog

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Slowly, David opened his eyes and looked around the horizon, wincing again with the new movement. There was nothing sticking above the water as far as he could see. He was alone.

Fourteen-year-old David Alspeth intended only to fulfill his uncle's last wish when he set sail in the Frog, but when a savage storm slams the tiny sailboat, David is stranded. No wind. No radio. Little water. Seven cans of food. And the storm is just the first challenge David must face... An American Association Best Book for Young Adults

The Voyage of the Frog Details


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Author : Gary Paulsen

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From Reader Review The Voyage of the Frog for online ebook

Clarisa says

The Voyage of the Frog is an amazing book to read. It is about a teenage boy named David who goes out into the sea to do one last thing for his Uncle Owen. He died from a type of cancer and wants David to spread his ashes in the sea. David takes The Frog, Owen's boat who gave it to David. When a storm hits, David is left to sailing his way back home. If you like survival stories, even ones about the sea, then The Voyage of the Frog is something you need to read for yourself.

Adam says

This was a great book. For my first time reading it I found it very intriguing and I loved it. I would recommend this book to anyone, especially if they like to read books by Gary Paulsen.

The Mystery Stallion says

David was all alone at sea. Or so he thought. In Gary Paulson's, The Voyage of The Frog, David has a mighty task daunting to complete: not die. Waves towering and winds gusting against the FROG make for an incredible task. David knowing that his fate doesn't look good, is overwhelmed with the materials he learned from his Uncle Owen, this giving David one last chance of hope. He never could have been prepared for the task that stands in the way from him and home.

My overall opinion for this book is that it's an okay read. The book wasn't too complex or difficult to read. It grabbed the attention and maintained it which was very nice. However, as an adult, I would say the book is a bit too easy. If I was to give this an age recommendation, it would be middle school, to low high school level. He did a great job with keeping the reader on the edge for the whole book and I was impressed with that aspect.

Adam Veaser-Johnston says

"The Voyage of the Frog"

Personal Response: I thought it was a good book. It was based on a true and devastating story that actually happened and that caught my eye.

Plot: The main character, David, set out on his uncle's boat to fill his last wishes. Once out at sea, David spreads his uncles ashes over the water and starts to head back to shore but is caught in a horrible storm. When David wakes up he finds that he is even further out than he was the day before and now waits for good winds. The next day David comes head on with a huge oil tanker and almost gets crushed but he worked out of the way. After a few days the winds finally caught and David was on his way. When he hit shore, he was over three-hundred miles south of his home city. Then another storm hits while he's in the Baja California

bay. After the storm hits another boat appears and David sails next to the other vessel. The captain comes over and says that he was looking for David because he's been gone for a week with no one knowing where he was. The search was called off because David was presumed dead. Later during the next week David got home.

Characters: David and Owen. David is the main character who went on a voyage to send his uncles ashes to sea where land couldn't be seen in any direction. Owen is David's uncle who died recently.

Setting: The time is modern day California. The place is out on the Pacific ocean far from land.

Theme: The main theme is that even when in a bind don't lose your head and if you're still alive make the most out of the time you might have left and try to find your way through a dark cave with a small light.

My recommendation is to anyone who likes a short adventure and a survival type book. I have no real age recommendations for "The Frog."

Stephen says

Fourteen-year-old David Alspeth has lost his favorite uncle to cancer. The uncle that taught him to sail and who had left him *the Frog*, his 22 foot sailboat. His last request is that David take his ashes to sea and dump them out of sight of land. In his grief David fails to plan ahead and carelessly sets sail at night without proper preparation. When David encounters a Pacific storm he realizes that he's not properly prepared to meet what the Pacific (or life) is throwing at him.

I thoroughly enjoyed this but then I'm always a sucker for sea stories. Given the themes, it's not surprising that some critics say that this is just a retelling of the Hatchet tale, and there are many, many similarities but I felt that this was overall, a better Bildungsroman than Hatchet was. Perhaps its just that I have more in common with a sailor than an air crash survivor, but I felt that threats were present without the time consuming scrambling for survival, giving the protagonist more time for reflection. In the end it's a kinder gentler coming-of-age story than Hatchet and I'm surprised it hasn't gotten more of a following as it has more that most young readers could identify with.

If you read Hatchet and enjoyed it, by all means check this out. And if you're a young sailor you definitely should read this.

Mermaid says

"I want you to have the Frog says Owen"

Gary Palsen, The Voyage of the Frog

As I am sitting here reading The Voyage of the Frog the word that kept coming into my head was... "I don't care!" This book was beyond boring and unless you are well versed on sailing it is extremely difficult to understand.

When a 14 year old boy who has never taken proper sailing lessons before is handed a job to do by his uncle

he sets sail. Within hours the boy and his boat is in trouble and without any safety measures put in place it doesn't look good.

The uncle was described as someone who was an excellent sailor and knew why around a boat very well but if all of this is true how could he not have the proper essentials for an emergency? I understand that as a writer you need conflict but *The Voyage of the Frog* seemed more of a fantasy read.

As far as the ending is concerned I was rolling my eyes. This young boy had no right being out on open waters (view spoiler)

Richard R. says

awesome book

Jeff says

This book is very interesting because at first I thought it was a frog going on a voyage but it was a 14-year-old boy sailing a boat. His uncle gave him a boat. Then he sailed it and he got stuck in the middle of nowhere. I recommend this book to people who like boats and who wants to know more about getting stranded.

VANCE!!!!!! Porter says

I liked the book "The Voyage of the Frog" by Gary Paulsen. I thought everything was unexpected because when he went out to dump the ashes, I thought he was just going to go out and come back and be fine. But then a storm came and blew him off course, and he was way off track. This is when everything got interesting. I think the scariest part was when the shark was slamming into the side of the Frog because the shark saw the shine of the Frog's hull and thought it was a fish. Also, I think it would be cool to go into a bay of an ocean, anchor, fall asleep, and then wake up to a group of whales outside playing around and blowing their blowholes.

The main character, David Alspeth, was a strong character. He kept his mind in the right mind set. He never really thought of how far he was from his home; he just thought about surviving and making his way back and keeping a tally on all the supplies he had. He found the beauty of nature even when he was mad and sad that he was so far away from home and didn't know how far he had gone. He was a very knowledgeable kid.

This story took place somewhere in the ocean, but it was just after his uncle had died, so his family was probably mourning during the story. He was sad and he was crying when he got up to the Frog, and he didn't like that he could put everything that his uncle was into a jar of ashes. The setting was after a funeral and he had to dump his uncle's ashes. I think the biggest impact was sadness.

I would recommend this book to girls and boys ages 9-17 because it is appropriate for their age, and I think

they would like It.

Jay says

Would recoment to any and all interested in sailing...

Ivan Cuevas says

When fourteen-year old David Alspeth's Uncle dies he leaves him only two things: a sailboat, The Frog, and an assignment to dump his ashes into the ocean. The voyage turned out to be more than he expected when a freak rainstorm blows him off his route. The Story describes how a young boy reacts to the loss of a loved one. Gary Paulsen skillfully wrote this lovely story about a boy, a sailboat, and an incredible act of love. I honestly completely LOVED this great book. I would recommend this to people who enjoy the sea and sailboats (or a nice story).

Bailey Vaughan says

“The Voyage of the Frog” has multiple themes, one of which being growth. The main character, David, promises his uncle that he will spread his ashes in the middle of the sea. When David sets out to do so, he’s angry at everything. As he sails he explores his emotions around his uncles death. He finally gets to a point in the sea where he can’t see any land. There, he scatterers his uncle’s ashes. He goes to sail back and see waves coming. The boat gets tossed in the storm pushed farther out to sea. As he tries to sail back, he grows in his ability to problem solve and comes to peace with his uncles death. He grows so close to the sail boat the when he has an opportunity to leave the boat and get rescued, he chooses to sail home instead.

I thought it was interesting how David adapted to the change and how in solving one external conflict, he solved another internal conflict. The author uses the sea and sea creatures as a motif. At the beginning, when David is scared and angry, the sea appears rough and unforgiving. He thinks of all the dangerous creatures surrounding his boat. Towards the end, he views the sea as calm and peaceful. He sees the creatures as company.

This books is sort of similar to other books where characters have to overcome an external problem while struggling internally. Gary Paulsen uses that technique a lot. I read his other book, “Woods Runner.” In “Woods Runner” the main character, Samuel, has to help his parents escape while dealing with the memories of what war is leaving behind. Another similarity between these two books is that the main characters are young and have to take control and learn about responsibility in a difficult situation.

Caitlyn says

While I am slowly reading this for my book club, I am slowly starting to like it more and more. Though my

friends aren't really understanding the whole craze for this book, I think they will end up liking it in the end. I personally recommend this book for any young reader like myself, or if you are looking for a good read-aloud for your kid/class, I really think you should try this book out.

Vicki says

This story is gripping. This is a detailed account of a 14 year old boy, David, who sails out to spread his uncle's ashes in the ocean. What happens next is a story that anyone who has ever sailed would love to read. I'm still learning but the little I know helped me appreciate this story. I was so gripped by this story that I couldn't put it down for the last half of the book. When it was done my first thought was to look at the author to see their story. When turning to the back cover and seeing that it was Gary Paulsen, a big smile came upon my face. Paulsen never fails to surprise me with his expertise of outdoor adventures. The details! I love the details that Paulsen writes about.

Georgina Howlett says

Overall Rating: 4/5 Stars ★ ★ ★ ★

The Voyage of the Frog was a very nice, short book which didn't take me long to read at all. Yet another recommendation from a teacher, this book was one he'd read during his childhood, and as such he thought that I'd also enjoy it as I'm the same age as he was when he first read it. Unsurprisingly, I did indeed enjoy the book, however it wasn't really long enough to fully engage with the story. The structure of the novel was excellent, and the pacing was great, so I had no problems at all with getting through the book and enjoying the tale being told by Gary Paulsen.

PLOT: 3/5 Stars ★ ★ ★

The plot of this book was excellent for such a short novel. The main protagonist, David Alspeth, loses his uncle Owen to cancer at the very beginning of the novel and over the course of the book he sets off on a journey to fulfill his uncle's last wish, taking his ashes out to sea and scattering them in the ocean when land cannot be seen in any direction. This heart-warming (and heartbreaking) journey sees David sailing alone for the first time, an experience which is quite surreal to him, and it is interesting to see how he copes with all of the challenges which face him.

Due to the short length of the book, I couldn't really give a rating higher than three for the plot rating. Although I wasn't bored by the book, and whilst I did enjoy it and found the story interesting, there wasn't a big enough window for substantial development. When reading, I love to find an intricately-developed plot, one that not only covers the events which occur within the book, but also those that have happened before it and those which will happen after. A good background is of paramount importance to me, as if it's there, I can begin to understand how the characters have ended up in their current situation, why events are unfolding as they are, and what sorts of things have influenced the ensuing story. Whilst the book was enjoyable as it is, what I would have liked to have seen would have been a bigger insight into who David is, what his family is like, what sort of man Owen was... Things that matter in real life, but don't get explored very often in short works of literature.

WRITING: 4/5 Stars ★ ★ ★ ★

Though the book was short, one thing that did stand out to me was the quality of writing which Paulsen demonstrated. He had clearly researched into the various parts of a boat (if, of course, he didn't already know about them), and throughout the story he used a lot of sailing terminology, which, whilst being perfectly comprehensible for sailing enthusiasts, may have confused those readers not familiar with or interested in sailing. This factor is why I haven't given the writing section full marks; as a reader, I encountered many terms which I didn't know the meaning of, and this was tiresome in a way as I had to look up each individual thing just to know what David was doing or what was going on on the boat. Though I didn't know this until I'd finished the book (due to its unhelpful location) there is actually a handy diagram of the Frog (the ship spoke of within the novel, hence the title) in the back of the book which can be referred to at will. A better and more logical place for it, I think, would have been the front of the book as readers don't tend to skip to the end of a story before they've read it.

The detailed and relevant terminology wasn't the only thing I liked, however. The writing itself really seemed to flow and it was effortless to keep on reading; since I started this book at night to read a little of before I went to sleep, I found it hard to put down as I knew the chapters weren't long and the writing style was easy to follow. I can see why this is aimed at young adults as it isn't hard at all to fly through - it's the sort of book you read and remember, and the sort which encourages you to branch out and to pick up another book once you've finished. This quality is great in a book as first-time readers can be influenced to take more interest in literature, and since the love for both reading and writing is slowly dying out (or so people claim), it's great to know that there are still books in circulation which can capture a reader and make them enjoy the process of reading a book.

CHARACTERS: 4/5 Stars ★ ★ ★ ★

One of the best factors of the book had to be the characters. Though the only character we as a reader encounter is David, many others are referenced and the presence of sea life creates a very realistic atmosphere. The only other humans in the book are some other sailors who David meets over a couple of pages, and so they don't really qualify as being characters that we learn much about at all. David is a young boy of fourteen, just trying to fulfill his uncle's last wish, and the pressure and enormity of what he has to do evokes many emotions in him. We as a reader feel sorry for him, knowing how deeply his loss has affected him, and we grow to like him as he realises that the Frog isn't just a boat, it's a dear friend that he must look after for Owen's sake, if not his own.

The compassion he shows for the boat throughout truly demonstrates his love for both his uncle and sailing; this engages the reader in a unique way as we begin to admire him and his bravery, sailing out to sea alone before many challenges arise that he has to tackle by himself because there's nobody there to help him. The story told within *The Voyage of the Frog* depicts his first experience of sailing solo, and needless to say it doesn't go quite as planned. Despite his young age, David is shown to be a very mature young man and his reactions to the various scenarios (whilst slightly unlikely in some cases) are realistic and brilliantly described. We as readers begin to think of David as a friend, despite the fact that we don't know very much about him, and that's a really valuable feeling as it means that we learn what he learns and we agree with the decisions he makes, even if they're unorthodox or slightly unwise.

The aquatic life included within the book provides another lovely element to the story; the whales which he sees, the dolphins and the fish are all creatures known to show compassion, and his journey alongside them is something quite precious. His encounter with the shark is less amiable, and readers become frightened for his safety, but he comes out alive on the other side and that's when the sigh of relief comes. (With regard to

that, actually, he (David) concludes that the shark is hitting the boat due to the reflection of moonlight on the water - what about the blood on his head due to his collision with the boat's boom? Wouldn't that have smelled tasty? Or had his wash in the salt water taken care of that? It was something I thought about as I read, but probably doesn't matter as either way the shark left.)

Overall, the characters which we saw, human or aquatic, were enjoyable to read about and provided an easy narration through the story. David, from his portrayal by Paulsen, seemed like the kind of character I would get along with in real life due to his courageous attitude and determination, so I like how I could relate to him beyond the story.

ENDING: 3/5 Stars ★ ★ ★

The ending of the book was a nice one and I loved the determination which David displayed when faced with the decision he had to make. His struggles were finally coming to an end but he knew, against all odds, that the Frog had to remain with him and so he defies what is expected and makes his own way back home. Things start to look better for him, and he becomes more optimistic as the story comes to a close and the end of his journey draws near. It wasn't the best ending, nor the most unpredictable, but it was enjoyable and made me feel happy about the whole situation, despite the fact that he was still far from where he wanted to be.

Conclusion

On the whole, this book was very enjoyable and a great quick read. I'd definitely recommend it to young people and sailing enthusiasts as it's a really exciting and heartwarming/heartbreaking adventure which anyone can enjoy, even if you don't understand what all of the sailing terminology means! I don't think, despite the fact that I've enjoyed the book, I'll be purchasing *The Voyage of the Frog* for myself unless I find it cheap somewhere as it's not a book which I'd normally have picked up.

I am noticing a distinct pattern in terms of the books this one teacher is giving me; they all seem to have very sad qualities or moments in them, so I dread to think what's in store for me in future. I've actually chosen a book myself from his shelf this week, *Watership Down* by Richard Adams, so if I get to that one after Z for Zachariah (which is post-apocalyptic so it's bound to be negative) and it's sad I will have to speak to him about this. I will let you know in my future reviews how these next books turn out that I've borrowed both from him and the other teacher who lets me borrow his novels.
